

# VOLUME 2 chapter 14

## LAND USE PLAN



GOAL		POLICIES FOR DECISION MAKERS
NEIGHBORHOODS		
1	<i>Promote smart growth land use patterns in New Orleans and the region.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve and support the character of successful residential neighborhoods.</li> <li>• Revitalize challenged neighborhoods with new development that contributes to character and new vitality.</li> <li>• Locate higher-density uses at existing and proposed transit stations and hubs for critical mass and locate new transit to serve higher density areas.</li> <li>• Make downtown a vibrant 24-hour neighborhood and commercial/entertainment district.</li> <li>• Convert suburban style commercial strips and malls into walkable mixed-use centers.</li> <li>• Create neighborhood centers with a mixture of higher-density housing, retail and other uses at neighborhood edges on underutilized industrial/commercial land and key transit hubs.</li> <li>• Avoid new development where new infrastructure would be required.</li> <li>• Take advantage of vacant land on higher ground for higher density uses.</li> <li>• Preserve and protect environmentally sensitive land and coastal areas.</li> <li>• Promote walkable, mixed-use environments.</li> </ul>
2	<i>Promote development that can strengthen the city's tax and job base while serving citizen needs and preserving city character.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish urban design frameworks to guide new chain store, office, and light industrial development so that it improves the public realm and fits into the urban fabric.</li> <li>• Preserve land for industrial uses where there are active and prospective uses.</li> </ul>
3	<i>Strengthen the city's public realm and urban design character.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish design principles and standards in zoning and design guidelines for specific areas.</li> <li>• Create a framework for accepting, placing and maintaining public art in a way that ensures excellence and cost-effectiveness. Adopt an Artwork Donation Policy that sets specific policies and procedures for putting the framework into action.</li> </ul>

## A Introduction

New Orleans contains almost the entire continuum of contemporary land use environments—from a wildlife refuge and fishing camps, through suburban-style subdivisions and historic buildings, to modern high-rise buildings. In a broad sense, the city will continue to include these varied environments within its borders. In specific, however, there are many ways in which land use is likely to change over time.

The Land Use Plan sets forth the policy framework for the physical development of the city, providing a guide for city decision makers in directing the pattern, distribution, density and intensity of land uses that will, over time, best achieve the goals for livability, opportunity, and sustainability expressed throughout the Master Plan and provide sufficient land to meet demand for various land uses in the future. The focus of this part of the Master Plan is the Future Land Use Map, which shows the categories of land uses desired over time, and their densities and intensities. The map reflects the land uses that correspond to the long term vision, goals and policies expressed elsewhere in the plan, and it constitutes the most direct link between the Master Plan and the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance. It is important to note, however, that the Future Land Use Map is not a zoning map and it does not govern design or function. Highlights of the Future Land Use Map include:

- **No change in the overall existing footprint of the city.** New Orleans represents the heart of a much larger region, and focusing regional growth in the city makes sense from the perspective of environmental efficiency and smart growth.
- **Preservation of neighborhood residential character.** Prevailing character, in terms of scale, massing and density, are reinforced so that infill development must be compatible with existing patterns. Community facilities, such as schools and houses of worship, are included within residential neighborhoods, and corner businesses that meet criteria can continue to operate.
- **Mixed-use land use designations for greater flexibility in areas that would benefit.** Underutilized commercial and industrial areas and similar sites are designated as neighborhood centers and main street corridors for medium- to higher-density mixed-use areas that encourage compact, walkable, and transit-oriented development. A downtown mixed-use category sets the stage for tailoring future zoning to preserve and enhance the unique character of different parts of downtown. Larger parcels would require a site master plan, design guidelines and community process to ensure high quality development.

## The Land Use Plan and the “Force of Law”

The Land Use Plan is the foundation on which the City will implement the “force of law” provisions of the 2008 amendment to the City Charter:

- All land use actions must be consistent with, or at a minimum, not interfere with, the goals, policies and strategies of the Land Use element of the Master Plan and any future amendments to the Master Plan. This includes the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance and any other land development regulations and amendments, including preliminary or final approval of a subdivision plan, site plan, approval of a planned unit development, or a similar site-specific development plan.
- The Master Plan may not be amended more than once a year and the amendment processes by the CPC and the City Council must include opportunities for public comment.
- The City Council is required to provide funding for activities designed to ensure consistency between the Master Plan, zoning and land use actions.

## Is every idea in the Master Plan subject to “Force of Law?”

“Force of law” for the Master Plan means that land use actions must be consistent with, or not interfere with, the Land Use Plan included in this Master Plan (Chapter 14). That said, some of the ideas in Chapters 5 through 13 of the Master Plan (covering topics like Transportation, Neighborhoods and Housing and Green Infrastructure) may require actions that must be consistent with the Land Use Plan. Others would call for strategies and actions that go well beyond land use actions. Such ideas - the ones that go beyond land use actions -- are in the Master Plan as *recommendations*, not certainties or directives.

## The Neighborhood Character Studies in the Land Use Plan

A set of neighborhood character studies was created to identify commonalities and differences in the physical character of areas across the city, focusing on more than architectural style to include street organization and size, scale and massing, orientation to the street, and similar urban design features. These neighborhood character studies will inform design strategies and guidelines for infill and other development, decisions about demolition, and the place-based approach of the new zoning ordinance under development. *(See Volume 3 for the complete Neighborhood Character Study.)*

## The Urban Design Framework in the Land Use Plan

The Land Use Plan in Volume 2 includes a set of general urban design principles to guide future development in the city. These principles are intended to provide property owners and the public guidance on desired characteristics of new development. They focus on the “public realm,” the streets and other public spaces in the city, and on the aspects of private development that affect our experience of the public realm—for example, how parking is located in relation to pedestrians and building façades. According to the 2008 charter amendment, land use actions must be generally consistent with these urban design principles. Consistent themes within these urban design principles include:

- Design public spaces and the interface between private and public spaces to be pedestrian-friendly.
- Manage the impacts of parking on public streets and surrounding neighborhoods.
- Encourage lively ground-floor uses in downtown and commercial districts.
- Establish gradual transitions between small-scale and larger-scale development.
- Ensure harmonious infill by strategies such as respecting scale and massing; maintaining the street wall or setbacks; complementing established rhythms of windows, doors, porches, bay windows, or similar elements.
- Design new neighborhoods by integrating them into existing street grids; establishing transitions in scale and density from surrounding areas; providing usable open space; providing clusters of ground floor retail; establishing development-specific guidelines about building appearance, streetscape, signage, utilities, parking, landscape, sustainability, and materials.

## General Zoning Principles in the Land Use Plan

The Land Use Plan in Volume 2 contains a set of objectives and principles connecting the themes in the Master Plan to the new Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance (CZO) that is under development. Three overall zoning objectives are:

- Reinforce the physical character of New Orleans while striking a balance between the need to preserve and the need to innovate and grow. The new CZO will be divided into “places” based on the existing or desired character for an area.
- The purpose and intent of each zoning district will make clear what type of development would be expected, consistent with the master plan policies and future land use map, setting standards for location, size, shape and character of new development and how developments fit together.
- The new CZO will be predictable, understandable and enforceable.

## Summary of Land Use Strategies and Actions

**FIRST FIVE YEARS:** 2010–2014

**MEDIUM TERM:** 2015–2019

**LONG TERM:** 2020–2030

GOAL	STRATEGY	ACTIONS
1. Promote smart growth land use patterns in New Orleans and the region.	1.A. Preserve the overall character of existing residential areas.	<p>1. Create an efficient residential land use pattern that addresses the location and intensity of residential development while ensuring housing affordability and choice.</p> <p>2. Revise zoning districts to better reflect the city's established development patterns. Development patterns in areas built before World War II differ from those in areas developed after the war.</p> <p>3. Integrate development standards into district regulations that preserve established building character in terms of scale, massing, and placement.</p> <p>4. Revitalize challenged neighborhoods with new development that contributes to character and new vitality.</p> <p>5. Promote infill development on vacant lots in existing neighborhoods.</p> <p>6. Ensure that infill buildings fit in harmoniously in existing neighborhoods, but do not require them to copy existing architecture.</p> <p>7. Ensure that new housing built within established neighborhoods is compatible with the scale and character of existing development.</p> <p>8. Establish appropriate transitions between high-impact, medium-impact, and low-impact development.</p> <p>9. Ensure that multifamily housing is sensitive to neighborhood context.</p> <p>10. Create design and development standards for multifamily districts to assure compatibility with larger residential neighborhood around them.</p> <p>11. Respect the scale and massing of buildings in historic areas and other areas where existing scale should be preserved.</p> <p>12. Coordinate zoning districts with local historic designations in order to eliminate conflicts and inconsistencies.</p> <p>13. In revitalization areas, extend the positive qualities of existing adjacent neighborhoods into new developments.</p>
	Promote walkable, mixed-use environments and transit-oriented development.	<p>Create land use categories that allow for a mixture of uses, including residential, retail, and office uses. (See Mixed-Use land use category descriptions and the Future Land Use map.)</p> <p>Create zoning districts for mixed-use development of various scales from lower- to higher-density development.</p> <p>Preserve successful existing mixed-use commercial areas.</p> <p>Convert suburban-style commercial strips and malls into walkable mixed-use centers.</p> <p>Locate mixed-use neighborhood centers with higher-density housing, retail, and other uses on neighborhood edges to draw customers within walking and biking distance of residences.</p> <p>Locate higher-density uses at existing and proposed transit stations and hubs for critical mass; locate new transit service to serve higher-density areas.</p> <p>Design mixed-use neighborhood centers on large sites, such as underutilized or vacant retail or industrial parcels.</p> <p>Integrate large mixed-use sites into the surrounding street grid.</p> <p>Establish transitions in scale and density from surrounding areas.</p>

 **FIRST FIVE YEARS: 2010–2014**
 **MEDIUM TERM: 2015–2019**
 **LONG TERM: 2020–2030**

GOAL	STRATEGY	ACTIONS
1. Promote smart growth land use patterns in New Orleans and the region.	Promote walkable, mixed-use environments and transit-oriented development.	Provide areas with clusters of ground-floor retail and service uses with residential uses above in mixed-use centers.
		For large mixed-use sites, create development-specific design guidelines that address building appearance, streetscape, signage and utilities, parking design, landscape, sustainability, and materials.
		Provide usable and well-designed open space in mixed-use areas.
		Take advantage of opportunities for high density uses in developing vacant land on higher ground, and in areas where building can be flood resistant.
		Diversify New Orleans' housing stock in new residential development.
	Preserve existing, and create new parks and public spaces.	Ensure that land use categories provide areas for parks and open space. (See Parkland and Open Space land use category description and the Future Land Use map.)
		Provide for parkland and open spaces to meet the needs of residents.
		Reclaim the river and lake waterfronts for lively public spaces.
		Require, where appropriate, contributions to a network of open spaces through the development-approval process or requirements.
		Accommodate riverfront open space to support the Reinventing the Crescent Plan.
		Require usable open spaces on or off site for new residential units created downtown.
	Preserve and protect environmentally sensitive land and coastal areas.	Ensure a land use category that provides protection for environmentally sensitive and coastal land. (See Natural Areas land use category description and the Future Land Use map.)
		Protect environmentally sensitive areas, such as wetlands, from adverse impacts to enhance the city's water-storage capacity during storms and increase protection against storm surges.
		Protect and provide open spaces appropriate to conserving the region's natural resources and meeting the needs of its residents.
		Prohibit drainage of remaining wetlands for building except by special permit with mitigation that requires an opinion by the City Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs, or establish a local wetlands ordinance to regulate impacts on wetlands.
	Adopt sustainable land use and zoning practices.	Promote the use of water conservation and innovative stormwater-management techniques in site planning and new construction.
		Encourage, and in some cases require, sustainable stormwater-management practices, scaled to the size and character of the site. Current techniques include bioswales, green roofs, and landscaped islands in parking lots that are designed to absorb stormwater.
		Avoid new development where it would require creation of new infrastructure.
		Outside of existing residential areas, make residential uses a priority use for higher ground.
		Preserve land for transportation and drainage rights of way where needed, including rail, multiuse paths (for biking and walking), and canals and water-storage opportunities.
		Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by promoting the use of alternative energy systems (in the CZO) and increasing transportation choice.
		Increase access to healthy food at a lower environmental cost by supporting the production, processing and distribution of locally grown food.
		Allow community gardens and urban agriculture in appropriate locations.
		Reduce the urban heat island effect by designing new development in ways that minimize reflective flat surfaces.
		Include parking alternatives, such as shared lots and parking space maximums, to reduce the amount of paved surface in new development.
		Establish standards that address the number of bicycles to be accommodated for various land use categories.

 **FIRST FIVE YEARS: 2010–2014**
 **MEDIUM TERM: 2015–2019**
 **LONG TERM: 2020–2030**

GOAL	STRATEGY	ACTIONS
Promote development that can strengthen the city's tax and job base while serving citizen needs and preserving city character.	Preserve land for large employers.	Provide land use categories that encourage office development. (See General Commercial and Business Center land use categories descriptions and the Future Land Use map.)
		Create new and strengthen existing districts that accommodate large office, medical, and educational employment centers, without significant impact on residential components.
		Allow mixed-use development in campus districts.
		Institute planned development review for larger new projects to better integrate them into their context.
		Attract new employers by creating a positive image through appropriate development standards.
		Include new landscaping standards to buffer incompatible uses, screen parking lots and outdoor storage areas, and improve the appearance of sites and street frontage.
		Incorporate a design-review process that informs both the developer and the neighbors of community design standards and operational concerns.
	Preserve land for industrial uses where there are active and prosperous industrial uses.	Ensure that land use categories allow for industrial uses. (See Industrial land use category description and the Future Land Use map.)
		Create a more stable investment climate by reducing conflicts both within industrial districts and between adjacent non-industrial districts.
		Refine the industrial-district-use lists so that uses appropriate to the desired intensity and market orientation of the industrial district are permitted, rather than requiring a conditional use or text amendment.
		Provide appropriate locations for business and light industrial facilities in settings attractive and accessible to visitors and employees.
		Accommodate a range of industrial development, including standards for research and light industrial/office parks.
		Provide appropriate locations for warehousing, distribution, storage, and manufacturing.
		Review performance standards for industry in establishing uses and evaluating impacts near residential areas.
	Promote clustering of neighborhood retail and services and avoid long corridors of low-density commercial development.	Apply a land use category that allows for and encourages smaller, neighborhood-oriented retail establishments. (See Neighborhood Commercial land use category description and the Future Land Use Map.)
		Encourage small-scale neighborhood commercial uses within residential neighborhoods.
		Tailor commercial zoning districts to the form, function, and use of various commercial areas.
		Revise the current commercial district structure so that district standards are responsive to a district's purpose and desired character.
		Create a commercial district specifically designed to accommodate and encourage pedestrian-oriented, walkable, shopping environments.
		Create standards within the zoning ordinance for small local business districts located within predominantly residential areas.
	Make downtown a vibrant 24-hour neighborhood and commercial/entertainment district.	Ensure that land use categories specific to downtown are used to encourage a 24-hour live, work, and play environment. (See Downtown land use categories descriptions and the Future Land Use map. )
		Consolidate downtown zoning districts to better reflect the mix of places identified in the Master Plan.
		Support downtown's economic potential with a commercial district geared to the needs of business.
		Support downtown's vitality by creating a mixed-use district that encourages the reuse of existing structures and compatible infill construction and that is characterized by a mix of office, retail, institutional, and residential uses.
		Support appropriate development adjacent to the Superdome and convention center.
		Support the demand for mid- to high-rise residential development and make appropriate transitions to the surrounding neighborhoods.
		Support clustered development of museums and cultural venues by creating a zoning district for these uses and supporting retail and visitor services that promote the arts.

 **FIRST FIVE YEARS: 2010–2014**
 **MEDIUM TERM: 2015–2019**
 **LONG TERM: 2020–2030**

GOAL	STRATEGY	ACTIONS
Promote development that can strengthen the city's tax and job base while serving citizen needs and preserving city character.	Make downtown a vibrant 24-hour neighborhood and commercial/entertainment district.	Encourage higher-density development around a well-organized urban form.
		Establish Poydras Street and Loyola Avenue as the “spine” of the CBD, serving as the corridors of highest-intensity development.
		Create active, attractive street corridors that promote multimodal connections between different areas of the CBD, accommodate transportation access and parking demand, and promote a high level of pedestrian traffic and pedestrian amenity.
Strengthen the city's public realm and urban design character.	Provide guidance on desired characteristics of new development to property owners and the public.	Establish appropriate transitions between high-impact, medium-impact, and low-impact development.
		Establish transitions and buffers from retail to surrounding residential areas.
		Re-knit the urban fabric by introducing safe and attractive pedestrian and bicycle routes, better lighting, landscaping and public art to reduce barriers created by highways and arterial roads.
		Expand New Orleans' tradition of lively pedestrian streets to all neighborhoods.
		Locate building entries to promote safe pedestrian movement across streets; to relate to crosswalks and pathways that lead to transit stops; and to encourage walking, biking and public transit use for employment and other travel around the city.
		Provide for bicycles lanes, routes and parking.
		In downtown, establish gradual transitions between small-scale and larger-scale buildings.
		Limit extensive office uses on ground floors in favor of more lively uses, where feasible.
		Manage the impacts of parking structures by lining their street-facing sides with active uses.
		Manage the impacts of surface parking by locating, where feasible, parking in the rear of developments.
		Using DDD's Lafayette Square / Upper CBD refined height study as a guide, adopt clear and predictable building height limits for that portion of the Central Business District as part of the new Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance.
	Promote sustainability.	Include parkway tree-planting requirements.
		Require parking lot landscaping that shades the surface with tree cover to reduce the heat-island effect.
		Incorporate building elements that improve energy efficiency.
		Incorporate passive heating and cooling mechanisms into the design of building wherever possible.
		On buildings that are raised for flood-protection purposes, clad areas below floor level to create a consistent street wall.
		Create building-siting guidelines for larger developments to allow for passive solar systems.
	Create a framework for accepting, placing and maintaining public art in a way that ensures excellence and cost-effectiveness	Adopt an Artwork Donation Policy for the city that sets specific policies and procedures for all aspects of accepting, installing and maintaining public art.
		Establish expanded maintenance criteria by encouraging placement of donated public art according to the City's “Policy Guidelines for Donations of Artwork,” involving the Donation Process Review Committee as identified in the Arts Donation Policy.



## B Setting the Direction for Future Land Use: Guidelines and Placemaking Principles

The Future Land Use Map was created to reflect the vision, principles, goals, policies and recommendations of the *Plan for the 21st Century: New Orleans 2030*. It shows a distribution and geographical pattern of land uses that balances the desired persistence of many existing land uses and densities with land use changes that express the smart growth goals of the Master Plan.

FUTURE LAND USE GENERAL GUIDELINES	
<b>PRESERVE</b>	
Preserve the overall character of existing residential areas.	
Preserve environmentally sensitive areas, such as wetlands, from adverse impacts to enhance the city's water storage capacity during storms and increase protection against storm surge.	
Preserve existing successful mixed-use commercial areas.	
Preserve land for transportation and drainage rights of way where needed, including rail, multiuse paths (for biking and walking), and canals and water storage opportunities.	
Preserve parks and public spaces.	
Preserve land for industrial uses where there are active and prospective industrial uses.	
<b>PROMOTE</b>	
Promote infill development on vacant lots in existing neighborhoods.	
Promote redevelopment of commercial strips into walkable mixed-use centers.	
Prioritize higher ground for new residential uses outside of existing residential areas.	
Cluster higher-density new development near transit stations.	
Promote clustering of neighborhood retail and services rather than long, low-density commercial corridors.	
Diversify New Orleans' housing stock in new residential development.	
<b>LOCATE</b>	
Establish appropriate transitions between high impact, medium impact and low impact development.	
Locate mixed-use neighborhood centers on neighborhood edges to draw customers within walking and biking distance of residences.	
Avoid long corridors of low-density commercial development.	
Locate higher density land uses near transit stops.	

### Placemaking and Land Use

Cities are a series of places—neighborhoods, shopping districts, employment centers—each with a mix of land use, physical forms, and connective tissue that creates a unique character and identity. Along with the Master Plan vision of livability, opportunity and sustainability, these places create the context, first for future land use policy, and second, for the designation of zoning districts. How well this Master Plan and two of its most powerful implementation tools, the zoning ordinance and the capital improvement program, are used to make the kinds of places that New Orleanians want to either preserve into the future or create new for the future, will be one measure of the plan's success.

Placemaking informs land use and zoning by using policies and future public investments to organize land uses, their form and character; to infuse them with cultural values; and to provide for economic

opportunity—all in the service of achieving desired places. This approach is particularly well-suited to the opportunities and challenges in this Master Plan:

- Many neighborhoods with well defined and complex physical character that residents wish to preserve
- The need for appropriate guidance for the opportunity sites, so they can express their own time in new development yet fit gracefully into older contexts
- Clarity about what kinds of investments are appropriate in use, form and location, so that neighbors and the development community have a stronger foundation to reach agreement
- Creating the conditions for walkability, integrated land use and transportation, and sustainability
- Providing the context for application of the master plan’s urban design principles.

Places are distinguished by their infrastructure skeleton—transportation routes, water and sewer lines—the land use pattern that hangs on the skeleton, and the blend of building types and forms that flesh it out. The way places are configured and designed creates an environment that encourages or discourages certain kinds of human action. Design can promote a variety of activities and options, or it can constrain and channel activities. A place without sidewalks or paths has few walkers. Every desired place is a synthesis of its land use pattern with that pattern of physical development that, today, is conditioned by zoning. Using land use and zoning to create place organizes components of the master plan to attain the community’s vision at a citywide and neighborhood scale.

While a “sense of place” is more than the “form of the place,” if the form of place is not well managed, the sense of place will never occur. Consider the types of places found in any community—a center, neighborhoods, a commercial highway, or an industrial park. Thoughtful linkage between planning and zoning can establish or potentially transform the character of each of these places to reflect desired scale of development, pattern of property ownership, function and modes of travel.

Each of the places that makes New Orleans today and is desired in the future includes a group of land uses, building types, and formal character working together to accommodate a variety of life’s daily functions—living, working, playing, learning—in a manner which reflects the local culture, historical form, attitudes and values of that place. For example, one type of place is made up of a mix of one-, two- and up to four-unit residences often commingled with adjacent commercial uses, either as corner stores or small shopping blocks. Such places also have limited off-street parking opportunities, often contain buildings located close to the street and have limited private open space. The future land use and associated zoning of the New Orleans Master Plan is designed to integrate form and use, scale and massing, defining the way that the realm of private property owners frames the public realm of streets, parks and other public spaces so that this public realm becomes a desirable place for people to be and to gather.

## Future Land Use Categories

*(See Future Land Use maps at the end of this chapter.)*

### Residential

#### RESIDENTIAL SEMI-RURAL SINGLE-FAMILY

**Goal:** Provide for single-family residential development that preserves existing semi-rural character in areas like Lower Algiers (Planning District 13).

**Range of Uses:** Single-family dwellings. Cluster development that preserves open space is preferred. Supporting public recreational and community facilities are also allowed.

**Development Character:** Large-lot single-family new development will have a minimum lot area of 2 acres per dwelling unit. Cluster development may result in increased densities on individual lots, but when taken with preserved open space, the overall density will not exceed one dwelling unit per 2 acres.

#### RESIDENTIAL HISTORIC CORE

**Goal:** Preserve the character and scale of 18<sup>th</sup> through mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century residential areas and allow for compatible infill development.

**Range of Uses:** Single- and two-family residences, townhomes and small multifamily structures. Neighborhood-serving businesses and traditional corner stores may be allowed where current or former commercial use is verified. Supporting public recreational and community facilities allowed (e.g., schools and places of worship).

**Development Character:** The density, height, and mass of new development will be consistent with the character and tout ensemble of the surrounding historic neighborhood. A variety of types and sizes of development may be appropriate.

#### RESIDENTIAL PRE-WAR SINGLE-FAMILY

**Goal:** Preserve the existing character and scale of pre-war (WWII) single-family residential areas of the city and allow for compatible infill development.

**Range of Uses:** Single-family dwellings and supporting public recreational and community facilities allowed (e.g., schools and places of worship).

**Development Character:** New development will fit the character and scale of surrounding single-family residential areas where structures are typically located on smaller lots and have small front and side setbacks. Maximum density of 15 units/acre.

#### RESIDENTIAL POST-WAR SINGLE-FAMILY

**Goal:** Preserve the existing character and scale of low density single-family residential in post-war (WWII) areas of the city and allow for compatible infill development.

**Range of Uses:** Single-family dwellings and supporting public recreational and community facilities allowed (e.g., schools and places of worship).

**Development Character:** New development will fit with the character and scale of surrounding neighborhoods where single- and two-family residential structures are typically set back away from the street on larger lots than in older, pre-war neighborhoods. Maximum density of 10 units/acre.

#### RESIDENTIAL PRE-WAR LOW DENSITY

**Goal:** Preserve the scale and character of pre-war (WWII) residential neighborhoods of lower density where the predominant use is single and two-family residential and allow for compatible infill development. Discourage the development of additional multifamily housing that is out of scale with existing character.

**Range of Uses:** New development generally limited to single or two-family dwellings, and preservation of existing multi-family buildings. Businesses and traditional corner stores may be allowed where current or former commercial use is verified. Supporting public recreational and community facilities (e.g., schools

and places of worship) also allowed. Conversion to multifamily may be allowed for certain existing historic institutional, commercial or other non-residential buildings.

**Development Character:** New development will fit with the character and scale of surrounding residential neighborhoods where structures are typically located on smaller lots and have minimal front and side setbacks. Maximum density of 24 units/acre.

## RESIDENTIAL POST-WAR LOW DENSITY

**Goal:** Preserve the scale and character of post-war (WWII) residential neighborhoods of lower density where the predominant use is single and two-family residential lots and allow for compatible infill development.

**Range of Uses:** New development is generally limited to single-family dwellings, with two-family and town home development allowed where it currently exists or formerly existed. Supporting public recreational and community facilities (*e.g.*, schools and places of worship) are also allowed. New two-family dwellings and town home developments may be allowed in planned communities. Conversion to multifamily may be allowed for certain existing historic institutional, commercial or other non-residential buildings.

**Development Character:** New development will fit with the character and scale of surrounding neighborhoods where single- and two-family residential structures are typically set back away from the street on larger lots than in older, pre-war neighborhoods. Maximum density of 20 dwelling units per acre.

## RESIDENTIAL PRE-WAR MEDIUM DENSITY

**Goal:** Preserve the character and scale of pre-war (WWII) residential areas that currently have a variety of housing types and sizes and allow for compatible infill development.

**Range of Uses:** Single- and two-family residences, townhomes and small multifamily structures. Businesses and traditional corner stores may be allowed where current or former commercial use is verified. Supporting public recreational and community facilities allowed (*e.g.*, schools and places of worship).

**Development Character:** New development will conform to the general character and scale of surrounding neighborhoods. A maximum of 36 dwelling units/acre allowed. These areas are primarily located along major roadways, often with bus or streetcar service—existing or planned—that can support higher densities.

## RESIDENTIAL PRE-WAR MULTIFAMILY

**Goal:** Preserve the character and scale of existing multifamily residential areas in older areas of the city and encourage new multifamily development at nodes along transit routes that can support greater densities.

**Range of Uses:** Multifamily residential structures allowed. Limited neighborhood-serving commercial uses on the ground floor allowed.

**Development Character:** Maximum of 100 dwelling units/acre. Taller high-rise structures could be allowed where appropriate with design guidelines.

## RESIDENTIAL POST-WAR MULTIFAMILY

**Goal:** Preserve the character and scale of existing suburban multifamily residential areas and encourage new multifamily development at nodes along potential mass transit routes or major city roadways that can support greater densities.

**Range of Uses:** Mixed single- and two-family units, and multifamily residential structures allowed. Limited neighborhood-serving commercial uses on the ground floor allowed.

**Development Character:** Maximum of 36 units/acre. Design guidelines and landscaping requirements required to encourage walkability and allow for proper transition to surrounding single-family and low density neighborhoods.

## Commercial / Industrial

### NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL

**Goal:** Provide areas for small-scale, neighborhood-oriented commercial development that enhances the pedestrian character and convenience of neighborhoods by allowing commercial establishments in select locations within walking distance to surrounding residential areas.

**Range of Uses:** Retail and professional service establishments serving local neighborhood area residents. Common uses include small groceries, restaurants, barber shops/salons, clothing boutiques, banks, pharmacies, and small health professional offices. Conversion to multifamily may be allowed for certain existing historic institutional, commercial or other non-residential buildings.

**Development Character:** Buildings are oriented to the sidewalk (parking in rear where possible) with maximum heights related to the character of the street. Landscape requirements for parking lots facing the street.

### GENERAL COMMERCIAL

**Goal:** Increase the availability of retail services and amenities (and increase retail tax base) within the City of New Orleans, especially in areas that are currently underserved by retail, with existing and new medium- and large-scale commercial establishments and shopping centers.

**Range of Uses:** Larger commercial structures including shopping and entertainment centers typically anchored by large supermarkets, department stores or big-box style establishments with supportive chain retail and surface or structured parking.

**Development Character:** Structures oriented to the street where possible to encourage both pedestrian and automobile traffic. Sites are limited to accessible locations along major city roadways or highways with minimal negative impact on surrounding residential areas, often in proximity to transit.

### DOWNTOWN EXPOSITION

**Goal:** To provide areas of downtown that will house and support high-volume visitor traffic at major trade and spectator venues including the Convention Center and Superdome.

**Range of Uses:** Convention center, sports/entertainment arenas/complexes and supporting uses such as hotels, and office space within the CBD.

**Development Character:** The scale (height and massing) of new development will vary depending on location and proximity to historic districts.

### BUSINESS CENTER

**Goal:** Provide areas to serve as regional employment centers outside of the Central Business District.

**Range of Uses:** Professional office and/or light industrial parks (warehouse, distribution and storage centers). Large retail centers are not permitted but supportive retail is allowed.

**Development Character:** Structures often in “business park” settings, typically with surface parking. Landscaping and buffers required, particularly when proximate to residential areas.

### INDUSTRIAL

**Goal:** Retain land to further strengthen port activity, maritime-related activities, manufacturing and other uses that provide jobs and opportunities for New Orleans’ residents.

**Range of Uses:** Heavy manufacturing, maritime uses, water treatment and transfer and large warehousing/distribution facilities.

**Development Character:** Often located near rail and highway infrastructure, massing and bulk will vary depending on location, however, proper buffers/standards required, particularly when abutting residential neighborhoods.

## Mixed-Use

### MIXED-USE HISTORIC CORE

**Goal:** Increase convenience and walkability for neighborhood residents and visitors within and along edges of historic core neighborhoods.

**Range of Uses:** A mixture of residential, neighborhood business, and visitor-oriented businesses. Uses may be combined horizontally or vertically, and some structures may require ground floor retail with residence or offices on upper floors. In some areas where current or former industrial use is verified, existing buildings may be appropriate for craft and value added industry.

**Development Character:** The density, height, and mass of new development will be consistent with the character and tout ensemble of the surrounding historic neighborhood. Appropriate transitions will be provided to surrounding residential areas.

### MIXED-USE MARITIME

**Goal:** Preserve and provide areas for maritime-related residential and commercial uses east of Chef Pass on properties adjacent to Chef Menteur Highway in Lake St. Catherine (Planning District 11), along a certain portion of the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet near Interstate 510, and around harbors along Lake Pontchartrain.

**Range of Uses:** Single-family residential, fishing camps and boathouses, marinas, yacht clubs, maritime associations, community sailing, maritime-related businesses and supporting commercial uses. New development shall only be permissible in accordance with State regulations.

**Development Character:** Scale (height and massing) and allowed uses to match existing character of surrounding areas.

### MIXED-USE LOW DENSITY

**Goal:** Increase neighborhood convenience and walkability within and along edges of neighborhoods with low density residential and neighborhood-serving retail/commercial establishments.

**Range of Uses:** Low-density single-family, two-family and multifamily residential and neighborhood business; typically businesses in residential scale buildings interspersed with residences. Uses can be combined horizontally or vertically (ground floor retail required in certain areas). Limited light-industrial uses (craft and value added industry and passive warehousing and storage) may be allowed in some areas.

**Development Character:** Height/mass, and density of new development varied depending on surrounding neighborhood character.

### MIXED-USE MEDIUM DENSITY

**Goal:** Create medium-density neighborhood centers to enhance walkability and serve as focal points within neighborhoods. Proximity to transit encouraged.

**Range of Uses:** Medium-density single-family, two-family and multifamily residential and commercial uses. Limited light industrial uses (craft and value added industry and passive warehousing and storage) may be allowed in some areas.

**Development Character:** Height/mass, and density of new development varied to ensure proper transitions to surrounding lower density residential neighborhoods. Many structures will feature ground floor retail with residences on upper floors.

### MIXED-USE HIGH DENSITY

**Goal:** Encourage compact, walkable, transit-oriented (or transit-ready) neighborhood centers with medium-to-high density multifamily residential, office, and commercial services at key, underutilized, centrally located parcels within neighborhoods and along edges.

**Range of Uses:** Medium- to high-density multifamily residential, office, hotel and commercial retail.

**Development Character:** These areas will provide proper transitions to surrounding areas with lower



densities/heights. Many structures will require ground-floor retail with residences or offices or both on upper floors.

## MIXED-USE DOWNTOWN

**Goal:** Support and encourage a vibrant, 24-hour live-work-play environment in the Central Business District, and provide areas to support a high density office corridor.

**Range of Uses:** High density office, multifamily residential, hotel, government, institutional entertainment and retail uses. No new heavy or light industrial uses allowed.

**Development Character:** The scale of new development will vary depending on location within the CBD and will be determined by appropriate height and massing, particularly near historic districts.



## MIXED-USE DOWNTOWN CORE NEIGHBORHOOD

**Goal:** Encourage and support a compact, walkable, transit-oriented, mixed-use neighborhood at the core of the city.

**Range of Uses:** A mix of residential, office, commercial, hotel, retail, and service uses.

**Development Character:** The scale of new development will vary depending on location, with taller development generally encouraged along the edges of the CBD and new development that is sensitive to the scale of the neighborhood encouraged within the interior of the area.

## MIXED-USE HEALTH/LIFE SCIENCES NEIGHBORHOOD

**Goal:** Provide areas for hospitals, offices, supportive retail and residential uses to create a vibrant neighborhood center with job growth in the medical care and research sectors.

**Range of Uses:** Hospitals, offices, residential (single-family, two-family, and multifamily along major corridors), and supporting neighborhood retail/services.

**Development Character:** The scale of new development will vary depending on location and will be determined by the appropriate height and massing. Special attention needed to ensure appropriate transitions from higher density corridors (e.g., Tulane Avenue) to surrounding historic, low density neighborhoods.

## PLANNED DEVELOPMENT AREA

**Goal:** Allow for the potential development of large underutilized or underdeveloped parcels that are completely within the external levee protection system and only in areas that do not contain sensitive wetland environments.

**Range of Uses:** Single-family, two-family and multifamily residential, recreational, commercial or industrial uses dependent on formal planning process. Cluster development that preserves open space is preferred.

**Development Character:** The type and scale of new development would be determined through a multitiered planned development process that would require community input and city approval. Large-scale, coordinated development with appropriate transitions to surrounding uses and neighborhoods is preferred.

## Institutional

### INSTITUTIONAL

**Goal:** Preserve and enhance existing large-scale institutions such as health care, education (colleges and universities), detention centers and other facilities.

**Range of Uses:** Hospitals, colleges, universities, military and public detention facilities with large campus-like facilities. Smaller-scale, local houses of worship, public and private schools, police and fire stations, emergency and community centers are included in residential, commercial and mixed-use areas, as they are essential components of neighborhood life.

**Development Character:** Large-scale, coordinated campus development with appropriate transitions to surrounding uses and neighborhoods.

## Open Space and Recreation

### NATURAL AREAS

**Goal:** Retain and preserve natural areas and wetlands resources for storm water storage, conservation, public enjoyment, and for protection of coastal resources.

**Range of Uses:** Open space and active recreation that do not have adverse impacts on wetlands and natural areas. (Other uses may be allowed with conditional permit and restoration requirements.)

**Development Character:** No structures except those necessary to support the principal use.



## PARKLAND AND OPEN SPACE

**Goal:** Provide areas for parks, recreational facilities and open space networks owned by public or semi-public entities while offering the opportunity to utilize such spaces for stormwater management measures.

**Range of Uses:** Parks, playgrounds, recreation facilities and athletic fields; neutral grounds and passive open spaces, rain gardens, bioswales and other stormwater management measures.

**Development Character:** Ranges from programmatic parks and indoor and outdoor recreational areas to preserved open space, with the opportunity to provide for stormwater management measures.

## CEMETERY

**Goal:** Preserve and provide areas for cemeteries.

**Range of Uses:** Cemeteries

**Development Character:** Cemeteries and accessory buildings.

## Transportation

### TRANSPORTATION

**Goal:** Retain and enhance areas for transportation infrastructure and services.

**Range of Uses:** Airports (Lakefront Airport), train yards, ferry terminals and city-owned parking facilities, and supporting office and low-intensity storage/warehouse uses.

**Development Character:** Massing and bulk will vary depending on location, however landscaping and buffering standards are required, particularly where abutting residential neighborhoods.

## Future Land Use by District

*(See district level Future Land Use maps at the end of this chapter.)*

The changes below highlight many of the proposed modifications to land use by planning district. Although category names have been modified since the 1999 adopted land use map, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, the vast majority of the city retains its existing land use and built character, scale and massing including nearly all existing single-family, and single- and two-family residential neighborhoods, established neighborhood and general commercial corridors and centers, and employment centers located in downtown and industrial areas. Modified land uses are largely found in underutilized, blighted or vacant areas of the city where change of use will enable the city to grow more sustainably (mixed-use, walkable, transit oriented/ready environments), and bring back an increased retail and business tax base.

## Planning District 1A

Existing land uses within the Central Business District essentially remain, however new use categories were created to better define subarea priorities and purposes. These include:

- **Mixed-Use Downtown:** High density, high-rise office, retail and residential districts in the CBD that balance economic growth, urban design and residential opportunity and further facilitate the creation of a vibrant, transit-oriented, 24-hour community. Particular concerns about height around Lafayette Square need to be resolved, and adaptive-reuse supportive building codes should be developed to facilitate rehabilitation of historic Canal Street structures.
- **Mixed-Use High Density:** A high density residential, office and commercial district that continues to facilitate the evolution of the Warehouse District into a vibrant 24-hour residential, dining and cultural community, but restricts height of new development.
- **Downtown Exposition:** Land uses to serve and support Convention Center and Superdome complexes.

## Planning District 1B

The district retains existing neighborhood mixed-use and residential land use designations, however, several new land use categories have been applied to distinguish the varied character and scale of the area to better preserve its unique National and Local Historic District status.

- **Mixed-Use High Density:** Areas closest to Canal Street accommodate concentrations of mid- to high-rise structures that house residential, hotel, office and higher concentrations of retail/commercial uses (e.g., Bourbon Street).
- **Mixed-Use Medium Density:** A transition zone of medium density residential and retail uses between the higher density, more commercial, Upper Quarter and lower density, more residential Lower Quarter.
- **Residential Medium Density Pre-war:** Reflects the existing character and allows for a varied mix of residential structures from single-family to small apartments/condominiums, and the existing historic corner stores and businesses.

## Planning District 2

Much of the district retains existing land use character (Residential Pre-War Low Density), however new residential and mixed-use designations better reflect the existing and desired future built environment. Most significant land use changes have been applied to two underutilized commercial and industrial areas to allow for a mixture of uses, including:

- **Mixed-Use High Density** at South of the Convention Center area. With proximity to the CBD and Convention Center, large vacant industrial parcels, and recent multifamily residential development (The Saulet), the area is poised to support a vibrant, high density riverfront community of housing and supportive neighborhood service retail. Special attention must be paid to height, view corridors, and transitions to surrounding neighborhoods.
- **Mixed-Use High Density** along O.C. Haley Boulevard: Building upon current Main Street and NORA initiatives, a medium-to-high density mix of office, neighborhood commercial, live/work space, and residential units will reestablish the O.C. Haley corridor as the core of the Central City neighborhood.

Other changes include:

- **Mixed-Use Medium Density** along Saint Charles Avenue better reflects the existing character of the downriver section of the corridor, which consists of mid-rise multifamily housing, retail and office spaces.
- **Business Center** north of Tchoupitoulas Street will encourage continued job creation in the entertainment/new media sectors by allowing for warehouse, soundstage and supportive office spaces.
- **Residential Pre-War Multifamily** in the Lower Garden District allows for the development of multifamily residential units closer to the riverfront (and around the existing La Saulet complex).
- **Residential Pre-War Medium Density** in Central City better reflects the overall residential character throughout much of the neighborhood, which historically has included side-by-side single, two-family and small apartment buildings.

## Planning District 3

The majority of the district retains existing land uses (Residential Pre-War Low Density). The notable land use changes include:

- **Mixed-Use High Density** at Carrollton Avenue and Palmetto Street: The area's large underutilized commercial parcels, existing multifamily residential structures, neighboring Xavier University, proposed transit connections (light rail from downtown to the airport, and Carrollton/Canal streetcar connection), and proximity to I-10 would support a transit-oriented centrally located, high-density residential, retail and office concentration with connections to the Carrollton and Mid-City neighborhoods.
- **Mixed-Use Low:** Neighborhood-scale residential/commercial concentrations to support surrounding communities and encourage walkability:
  - > Apple Street (between Leonidas Street and Carrollton Avenue)
  - > Leonidas Street (between Oak Street and Spruce Street)
  - > Tchoupitoulas (between Octavia and Valance Street)
  - > Claiborne Avenue and Calhoun Street

## Planning District 4

While the majority of neighborhood residential and commercial areas retain existing character and scale (Residential Pre-War Low Density), several land use changes have been applied to portions of the district, particularly along the Canal Street and Tulane Avenue corridors.

- **Mixed-Use Health/Life Sciences Neighborhood:** Large vacant and underutilized parcels and residential neighborhoods bounded by Claiborne Avenue, Canal Street, Galvez Street, South Rocheblave Street and Tulane Avenue, would encompass a community of hospitals, residential homes and complexes, and supportive office and retail.
- **Mixed-Use High Density** along Tulane Avenue: A medium-to-high density corridor of residential and ground-floor neighborhood retail to support the emerging medical district and Mid-City neighborhood. Proposed Bus Rapid Transit route would expedite travel to and from the CBD.
- **Mixed-Use Medium Density:**
  - > Lindy Boggs site: With large parcels of underutilized industrial land, a successful multifamily residential reuse project (American Can), existing retail uses (Rouse Supermarket and Home Depot), proximity to City Park, and direct transit access to downtown and the medical district, the area is strategically situated to support a medium density Main Street area of residential, live/work and commercial uses. Additional green infrastructure (the Lafitte Greenway) is proposed through the village area. (Ideally, the area would be developed as a PUD.)
  - > Broad Street: Medium density mixed-use strategic nodes at Canal Street, St. Peter Street, Bayou Road, and St. Bernard Avenue with neighborhood commercial and low density multifamily housing to encourage pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods.
- **General Commercial** along Earhart Boulevard: Large vacant/underutilized light industrial parcels with strong neighborhood and highway connections would support national chain retail establishments for city residents and recapture lost retail tax revenue from neighboring parishes. Special attention must be paid to design standards and transitions to nearby residential development (B.W. Cooper).

## Planning District 5

Land use categories reflect the recently adopted, community-supported single-family residential zoning districts and neighborhood commercial corridor along Harrison Avenue. Changes include:

- **Mixed-Use Medium Density** at Pontchartrain Boulevard and W. Robert E. Lee Boulevard: Underutilized shopping plaza adjacent to existing multifamily high-rise structures and underutilized commercial parcels abutting the waterfront would best be utilized as a medium density neighborhood oriented center with entertainment/dining/retail establishments to both support the Lake area and draw in tourism. New and improved transit connections (BRT) would provide better connectivity.
- **Mixed-Use Maritime:** Allows for continued mixture of land uses including boat houses, restaurants, maritime industries/businesses, and supportive retail services around the Municipal Yacht Harbor/Orleans Marina area.

## Planning District 6

Significant areas of the district retain existing residential uses (Residential Post-War Low Density). Several notable land use changes include:

- **Mixed-Use High Density:**
  - > Gentilly Boulevard and Elysian Fields Avenue: Large, underutilized shopping center parcels at key intersection along a proposed transit corridor (streetcar or BRT along Elysian Fields) would support a compact, pedestrian-oriented, medium-to-high density village of residential, commercial and office uses that would serve nearby Dillard University and surrounding high-density single and two-family neighborhoods.
  - > Chef Menteur Highway (west of Industrial Canal): The area's large vacant and underutilized commercial and multifamily residential sites, its proximity to I-10 and the proposed BRT route to New Orleans East, make for a strategic urban village setting with medium to high density residential and commercial uses. (Ideally, the area would be developed as a PUD.)
- **Mixed-Use Medium Density** (Elysian Fields Avenue and Robert E. Lee Boulevard): Existing vacant and underutilized commercial parcels at the terminus of proposed Elysian Fields transit corridor (BRT/Streetcar) would anchor a medium density town center with multifamily residential and neighborhood supporting retail near the UNO campus.
- **Post-war Residential Single Family:** Residential areas lakeside of Gentilly Boulevard area all designated as single-family. Existing doubles may remain, and can be rebuilt.

## Planning District 7

The majority of the planning district retains land uses compatible with existing conditions and previous plans. Changes within the district include:

- **Mixed-Use Medium Density:**
  - > St. Claude Avenue: The land use category respects existing neighborhood character of interspersed neighborhood and residential uses, and would support new medium density development with the addition of the proposed streetcar extension.
  - > Elysian Fields Avenue at Decatur (at the river): Vacant and underutilized (potentially city owned) parcels to anchor Frenchman Street and Decatur Street (French Quarter) corridors with medium density multifamily residential component and supportive neighborhood commercial. Development must respect existing historic neighborhood character and scale.
- **Residential Post-War Low Density:** Florida/Desire area to transition from multifamily to single-/two-family use category.

## Planning District 8

The majority of the Holy Cross neighborhood retains its Residential Pre-War Low Density uses. Changes include:

- **Mixed-Use Low and Medium Density:** Allows interspersed neighborhood commercial and existing residential uses along:
  - > St. Claude Avenue
  - > North Claiborne Avenue and Caffin Avenue
  - > Reynes Street (Holy Cross High School): Former school site should be redeveloped into a medium density neighborhood center and could include the adaptive reuse of existing school structure.
- **Residential Post-War Low Density:** With the vast majority of properties now vacant, a less dense residential development pattern would be best supported in areas between Claiborne Avenue and Florida Avenue.
- Much of the planning district (outside of the Holy Cross neighborhood) is now vacant as a result of Hurricane Katrina. Several projects are underway, most notably the Make-It-Right home development. This area remains in a more active recovery mode due to the extent of damage from Hurricane Katrina compared to other areas. Additional residential financial recovery assistance is needed.

## Planning Districts 9 and 10

All existing single, double and multifamily residential areas remain (now designated as Post-war), however the large vacant commercial areas along the I-10 corridor have been re-categorized as general commercial at varying densities. Land use changes in the districts include:

- **General Commercial:** Redevelopment of blighted/vacant sites south of I-10 into commercial nodes to recapture retail tax revenues from neighboring Parishes.
  - > Former Plaza at Lake Forest mall and adjacent retail centers to offer pedestrian-oriented, Main Street and big-box retail and office concentration, with potential BRT connection to downtown and the West Bank. (Ideally, the area would be developed as a PUD, or “Lifestyle Center”).
  - > Crowder Boulevard at Lake Forest Boulevard: Redevelopment of former commercial and multifamily residential sites into neighborhood scale commercial retail area. Proposed BRT would provide expedited access to downtown.
  - > Chef Menteur Highway (Western Portions): Large vacant/underutilized light industrial parcels with direct connection to I-10 would support chain retail/grocery establishments to serve both neighborhood and city residents.
- **Neighborhood Commercial** along Chef Menteur: Concentrated nodes of neighborhood commercial uses to support residential areas further east along Chef Menteur Highway.
- **Business Center**—Large underutilized former industrial parcels south of Chef Menteur Highway would provide employment in office parks not suited for downtown areas. Light industrial warehouse and storage facilities would also be permitted, but not commercial retail centers.
- **Mixed-Use Medium Density** along Chef Menteur at Village del ‘Est: Small mixed-use retail/office/residential center as highlighted in neighborhood plan.
- **Planned Development Area:** Large areas of undeveloped land that lie within the external levee protection system may potentially be developed, and if wetlands are not present would require a comprehensive planned development process, including a public outreach process to determine appropriate, environmentally responsible development.

## Planning District 11

- **Mixed-Use Maritime:** Single-family homes, fishing camps, marine-related businesses and supporting businesses east of Chef Pass only on parcels adjacent to Chef Menteur Highway in Lake St Catherine.

## Planning District 12

The majority of the planning district retains existing residential densities. This includes Pre-war Low Density housing closer to Algiers Point, and Post-war Residential Single- and Multifamily areas closer to Lower Algiers (Planning District 13). Changes include:

- **Mixed-Use High Density:** Planned office, residential and retail BRAC project along Mississippi River
- **Mixed-Use Medium Density:**
  - > General De Gaulle Drive at Holiday Drive: Encourage underutilized portions of Village Aurora shopping center and surrounding parcels, to be developed into a transit-ready compact, pedestrian-oriented, medium density neighborhood center development with residential, commercial and office uses. Proposed BRT routes would better connect and shorten travel times to the East Bank.
  - > Woodland Highway at Woodland Drive: Redevelopment of vacated shopping center into a primarily residential center with supporting neighborhood commercial. Potential BRT connection would expedite travel to the East Bank.
- **Mixed-Use Low Density:** Neighborhood-scale residential (including existing single-family, two-family residences) and commercial corridors to encourage walkability in surrounding communities.
  - > Algiers Point
  - > Newton Street
  - > Opelousas Avenue
  - > Joe Ellen Smith Medical Center site

## Planning District 13

Minimal changes are recommended. Existing subdivisions and areas near the bridge are now designated Planned Development Area to remain single-family. Due to limited infrastructure (public water, but not sewer), the remainder of the district will require 2 acres per dwelling unit to maintain the unique rural character. Residential development at higher densities should be in the form of conservation subdivisions that cluster housing in order to allow significant open space.

## Future Land Use and Zoning

The 2008 master plan charter amendment requires inclusion of a table showing the correspondence between land use categories in the Future Land Use Map and zoning districts. A new Comprehensive Zoning Code is being prepared simultaneously with this Master Plan but will not be adopted at the time the Master Plan is expected to be adopted. Upon completion of the Comprehensive Zoning Code, the table will be incorporated into this document.

How will we know if zoning is consistent with the Master Plan? The 2008 master plan charter amendment provides that:

“A Land Use Action is consistent with the Master Plan if the Land Use Action:

- (1) Furthers, or at least does not interfere with, the goals, policies, and guidelines, including design guidelines, that are contained in the Land Use Element of the Master Plan.



- (2) Is compatible with the proposed future land uses, densities, and intensities designated in the Land Use Element of the Master Plan.”

In practice, in many cases there will be several zoning districts in land use categories that appear on the Future Land Use Map. It will be possible to change zoning without amending the Future Land Use Map and the Master Plan as long as any zoning change is compatible with the parameters of the land use category on the map. Other zoning changes will require a master plan amendment.

## **F** Urban Design Framework

### Urban Design Framework

New Orleans is a city of special places with unique qualities. A towering skyscraper can enrich downtown if it meets the street with details and activities that delight, while a two-story building can diminish nearby Mid-City if it interrupts a street’s historic rhythm with a monotonous façade. While details will differ across the city, the core urban design principles should fundamentally promote more livable neighborhoods, greater economic opportunity for everyone, and enhanced sustainability.



Cultivate livability:

- **Preserve and enhance established neighborhoods and districts**—wet or dry, historic or new, residential or mixed-use. These places should benefit from design standards that embody the spirit and address the qualities that define character.
- **Extend New Orleans’ “signature” qualities to its new districts and neighborhood centers.** The Medical District, redeveloped shopping centers and other “opportunity sites,” and similar places should benefit from design standards that extend the walkability, tree-lined streets, lively façades on public sidewalks, mixed-use energy, and other qualities that mark the city’s historic neighborhoods.
- **Restore the critical mass to support key ingredients of livability.** Blight, smaller households, and changing lifestyles rob neighborhoods of the critical mass needed to support vibrant commercial districts, walkable streets, convenient transit, lively parks, and similar amenities. Restoring traditional densities and redeveloping opportunity sites will help all parts of the city regain this critical mass and attract a new array of housing and amenities to new and existing neighborhoods.
- **Advance healthy living.** The Centers of for Disease Control has emphasized the essential importance to public health of neighborhoods that encourage walkability, provide access to healthy food, and include health clinics—all qualities of successful New Orleans’ neighborhoods.
- **Build community in the midst of diversity.** The city can take advantage of the proximity in which people of different races, incomes, and ethnic backgrounds live—unusual among U.S. cities—to create

a renewed sense of community. Emphasizing walkable connections between neighborhoods that give people an opportunity simply to meet, making commercial districts more vital and providing well-programmed parks will draw New Orleans' diverse residents together across lines of difference. Initiatives like Reinventing the Crescent can reinforce the riverfront's critical role as the city's common ground. Interpreting the city's rich variety of architectural and cultural traditions can further the critical task of celebrating each other's stories.

Foster economic opportunity:

- **Offer the amenities that attract people to live, work, and invest.** Preserving New Orleans' historic character—embodied in its walkable streets, cultural richness, and mixed-use environments—and extending these qualities into new neighborhoods and districts is a critical ingredient in spurring growth.
- **Provide the education and services that move people out of poverty and into the workforce.** In building a city whose neighborhoods stand as revitalized, safe, and visible symbols of social cohesion, no amount of physical intervention will match the value of aggressive efforts to extend opportunity to every resident.
- **Plan for change that is welcomed by neighbors.** As the pace of economic transition quickens across America, so does resistance to the larger floor plates, greater height, new industries, new types of housing, and other changes that a vital economy needs. Development that responds to the needs of a changing economy should respect the scale and character of nearby neighborhoods and should reflect the goals described above for new places.

Promote sustainability:

- **Work with nature to enhance resilience.** No U.S. city is as conscious of the need to adapt to a changing environment as New Orleans. It can lead all American cities in exploring approaches to wetlands reclamation, elevating and hardening buildings, managing storm water to slow subsidence, integrating levees into the landscape, and other ways of working with nature to protect the city from rising seas and more frequent storms.
- **Reduce the city's carbon footprint.** National policy is clearly heading in a direction to support funding of projects that further reduce carbon emissions. New Orleans' per capita carbon footprint already ranks well nationally (#29 lowest metro area)<sup>1</sup> due in part to its compact form, strong preservation values, and walkable neighborhoods. Expanding transit use, attracting more residents to reduce sprawl, adopting green techniques in construction of and operation of new buildings, and similar measures, will further position New Orleans as one of America's greenest cities.



*This parking garage has retail at the street level.*



*New houses with harmonious designs make good neighbors.*

1 Brookings Institute, "Shrinking the Carbon Footprint of Metropolitan Areas." May 2008.





- **Celebrate the city's relationship to water.** A new generation of landscaped canals, rain gardens, restored wetlands, and similar steps can add a 21st-century urban design signature that enriches life in New Orleans while protecting the city from rain-driven flooding.

## Urban Design Principles

The following urban design principles are intended to provide guidance on desired characteristics of new development to property owners and the public. Application of the principles can vary in specific contexts and creative variations should be encouraged, as long as the spirit and intent of the principles is respected. Area-specific urban design principles may be found in neighborhood and area plans, and more detailed design guidelines will be created for projects on large sites that require site master plans.

### The public realm of streets, sidewalks, plazas, parks, and other public spaces:

- Reclaim the river and lake waterfronts for lively public spaces.
- Reinforce New Orleans existing boulevards and use a boulevard approach to improve wide arterials that do not currently include neutral grounds, or street trees.
- Re-knit the urban fabric by reducing barriers caused by highways and arterial roads, including by creating safe and attractive pedestrian and bicycle routes, improved lighting, landscaping and public art.
- Take New Orleans' tradition of lively pedestrian streets to all neighborhoods.
- Locate building entries to promote safe pedestrian movement across streets; to relate to crosswalks and pathways that lead to transit stops; and to encourage walking, biking and public transit use for employment and other travel around the city.
- Provide for bicycles—lanes, routes, parking, racks on streetcars and bike sharing infrastructure.
- Encourage active, publicly-accessible uses on the ground floors of buildings in mixed use areas.
- Screen and buffer service machinery and areas including mechanical systems on the roof or elsewhere; trash handling and storage; and loading docks.
- Design outdoor lighting at a pedestrian scale to provide safety, comfort and adequate night vision while minimizing light pollution.
- Encourage placement of public art to enhance the city's public landscape



**Surface and structured parking**

- Manage the impacts of surface parking by:
  - > Locating parking to the rear of developments.
  - > Planting shade trees and ground cover in parking lots as screens, shade at least 50% of the lot at maturity, and enhance stormwater management through plantings and pervious surfaces.
- Manage the impacts of parking structures by lining the street side with active uses.
- In areas with a concentration of retail and entertainment destinations, encourage centralized, iconic parking structures and circulation to and from parking structures by shuttle buses, pedicabs, and other appropriate means.

**Downtown**

- In downtown, encourage building design with ground floor levels that are welcoming to pedestrians and avoid blank and fortress-like ground floors.
- Limit extensive office uses on ground floors in favor of more lively uses, if feasible.
- Use trees, canopies, colonnades or galleries for shade along pedestrian streets.
- Establish gradual transitions between small-scale and larger-scale buildings.

**Retail areas**

- Discourage strip shopping center or stand-alone retail with buildings at the rear and parking at the front by locating the buildings at the street edge and providing parking to the rear.
- Establish transitions and buffers to surrounding residential areas.
- Locate pedestrian entrances on public streets and at or near street corners wherever possible.
- Maintain a consistent and minimal setback on commercial streets. Commercial structures should be built close to the street or with small setbacks to accommodate public spaces such as sidewalk cafes.
- Design ground-floor facades with maximum transparency and permeability.
- Maintain a consistent scale and character in signage and overhangs (*e.g.*, awnings, balconies, *etc.*).

**Neighborhood infill**

- Respect the scale and massing of buildings in historic areas and other areas where existing scale should be preserved.
- Design building facades to provide visual interest with articulations, materials, windows and other openings.
- Ensure that infill buildings in neighborhoods fit in harmoniously though do not require copies of existing architecture. Indicators include:
  - > Maintaining the street wall or façade line
  - > Complementing the established rhythm of windows, doors or other openings
  - > Activating the street by the use of bay windows, porches, stoops, or terraces

**New neighborhoods**

- Extend the positive qualities of existing adjacent neighborhoods into new developments.
- Design mixed-use neighborhood centers on large sites, such as underutilized or vacant retail or industrial sites by:
  - > Integrating the sites into the surrounding street grid.
  - > Establishing transitions in scale and density from surrounding areas.

- > Providing areas with clusters of ground floor retail and service uses with residential uses above
- > Providing usable and well-designed open space.
- > Creating development-specific design guidelines about building appearance, streetscape, signage and utilities, parking design, landscape, sustainability, and materials.

#### **Promote sustainability**

- Clad areas below floor level on buildings that are raised for flood protection purposes to provide a consistent street wall.
- Incorporate building elements that improve energy efficiency, such as green roofs, rain gardens, solar panels, wind turbines, and others wherever possible. These elements should be scaled appropriately and incorporated seamlessly into the overall façade.
- Incorporate passive heating and cooling mechanisms such as operable windows, sun shades, cross-ventilation, and adequate insulation into the design of buildings whenever possible.

*(See Volume 2, Chapter 5, for design principles for neighborhood commercial districts.)*

## General Zoning Principles

New Orleans is building the framework for future land use decisions with a new comprehensive zoning ordinance as part of the master planning process. The success of an updated ordinance relies on the vision behind it. Through citywide forums, district meetings, and community leadership groups, translating the plan's vision into reality through development regulations has been part of the discussion. This input has been and will continue to be a vital aspect of the zoning revision process.

NEW MASTER PLAN	NEW ZONING ORDINANCE
Defines the kinds of places that we value and want to see in the future	Establishes districts with rules that support these places
Describes the qualities and characteristics of these places	Establishes design standards that reinforce these qualities
Creates a land use map with the location of these places	Refines the land use map into specific zoning districts

The Master Plan's themes of How We Live, How We Prosper, Sustainable Systems and From Plan to Action have been tested with the citizens of New Orleans and there are three objectives that have been identified.

The first objective is that the new zoning ordinance reinforce the physical character of New Orleans and the important quality-of-life features reflected in its history, culture and public spaces while striking a balance between the need to preserve and the need to innovate and grow. To achieve this objective the new ordinance will be divided into "places" based on the character of development found in that area or desired for that area. The Neighborhood Character Area Study, found as an appendix in Volume 3, will inform this aspect of the zoning code. For instance, in the rural section, the zoning districts related to natural areas, open space and large-lot development will be grouped together, while in the traditional neighborhood section the appropriate residential, commercial and mixed use zoning districts would be found.

The second objective is that for each zoning district, its purpose and intent will clearly describe what type of development one would expect to find there consistent with the Master Plan policies and Land Use Map. The new ordinance will set standards for 1) the size, shape, and character of new development, 2) how new developments fit together and 3) the location of new development.

The third objective is that the new ordinance will be predictable, understandable and enforceable. Simple adjustments, repairs or amendments to the 40-year-old ordinance would not be enough. It will be organized to be user-friendly, to suit the unique characteristics of New Orleans, and to reflect and implement the policies in the plan.

## **A Zoning Response to the Master Plan Theme: How We Live**

A high quality of community life is essential to the success of every city in the 21st century. People want to live in places with high quality of life and are invested in their local community. Quality of life is critical to protecting, attracting and maintaining a stable workforce that, in turn, brings investment, employment, and an image and identity that welcomes tourists and visitors.

A series of goals and policies are identified in the Master Plan that address the key ingredients of high quality-of-life goals for neighborhoods, housing, historic preservation, open space, education, health care and community services. The new Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance will help achieve these goals by providing development standards that properly control the built environment—from the design of infill development to districts that encourage a variety of housing stock to the right mix of uses.

### **RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD ZONING PRINCIPLES**

- 1. Ensure that new housing built within established neighborhoods is compatible with the scale and character of the existing development.**
  - Revise the zoning districts to better reflect the established development patterns in the City. Development patterns within the pre-World War II areas of the city are different from those that developed after the war.
  - Revise the bulk and setback regulations within the residential districts to reflect existing development characteristics. For example, in the pre-war areas of the City, the front setback requirements should preserve the established variability, rather than enforce the present 20-foot setback requirement. Maximum permitted heights may be revised to preserve existing character.
  - Integrate development standards into district regulations that preserve the established building character in terms of scale, massing, and placement. This can benefit areas that do not have local historic district designation but want to ensure that their character is maintained.
  - Coordinate the zoning districts with local historic designations in order to eliminate conflicts and inconsistencies.
  - Create riverfront districts based upon the policies of the “Riverfront Vision” plan that implement the plan and reflect existing adjacent neighborhood character.
- 2. Ensure that multifamily housing is sensitive to its neighborhood context.**
  - Revise the current multifamily districts to match the desired character of multifamily development. Many of the current multifamily districts bear little relationship to the density and size of existing or desired development.
  - Create design and development standards for the multifamily districts to assure compatibility with the larger residential neighborhood.

**3. Create an efficient residential land use pattern that addresses the location and intensity of residential development while ensuring housing affordability and choice.**

- Provide regulations to insure proper transitions from lower to higher density development.
- Create districts for mixed-use development of various scales. This includes vertical mixed-use (within one building) and mixed-use on the broader neighborhood level.
- Include development flexibilities in the Ordinance standards to encourage adaptive reuse of historic structures. For example, it may not be possible for certain historic areas to accommodate regular parking and loading requirements. Rather than require variances, the Ordinance can include exemptions to encourage reuse.

## NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS DISTRICT ZONING PRINCIPLES

**1. Tailor the commercial districts to the form, function and use of various commercial areas.**

- Revise the current commercial district structure so that district standards are responsive to their purpose and desired character.
- Create a commercial district specifically designed to accommodate and encourage pedestrian-oriented, walkable shopping environments.
- Create commercial districts where shoppers arrive primarily by auto to be pedestrian-friendly and functional, but where parking is not the most prominent land use.
- Revise the current shopping center district standards to ensure a high quality of design and integration with other uses, as well as safety and comfort for pedestrians.
- Map commercial areas on the Zoning Map, based upon the future land use map and Master Plan policies, to create compact commercial and mixed-use development.
- Include design standards for each scale of commercial development. Districts like Magazine Street need different design approaches than commercial areas like the Bullard Avenue commercial corridor.
- Locate mixed-use development on the Zoning Map within or near commercial areas. Mixed-use development can also function as a buffer between large-scale commercial development and adjacent neighborhoods.

**2. Encourage small-scale neighborhood commercial uses within residential neighborhoods.**

- Create standards within the Ordinance for small local business districts located within a predominantly residential area. Standards within the Ordinance should carefully mitigate the impacts of these business districts and require a small-scale, pedestrian-oriented form.
- Include controls on the reuse of historic nonconforming commercial uses, such as the “corner store,” so that compatibility with the neighborhood is maintained in areas where the continued existence of such uses is supported.

## A Zoning Response to the Master Plan Theme: How We Prosper

A new Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance is essential to conserving the best of what we have while creating opportunities to grow our economy. One way to achieve this is to ensure that people who want to invest in our community know where they can locate, what the rules are, and that those rules are consistently and predictably applied.

The master planning process has identified a series of goals and policies addressing the key elements of How We Prosper: maintaining an economic base, education and workforce development, entrepreneurship and local small business development, neighborhood and commercial district revitalization, and enhancing economic opportunity. The new Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance can further these goals and help create value for the whole community by:

- *Removing Obstacles:* Eliminate or modify rules that unnecessarily hinder economic development.
- *Setting Clear Standards:* Develop and incorporate site design standards that enhance the appearance of the entire area.
- *Creating Incentives:* Provide flexibilities which encourage business development.

### CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT ZONING PRINCIPLES

Downtown is the most complex part of an urban center and downtown New Orleans is no exception. The area is a collection of diverse uses, mixed horizontally and vertically, each of which must be individually successful while contributing to a larger experience and identity. This complexity is magnified by the multiple ways in which people experience the place. Today's downtown New Orleans simultaneously serves as a neighborhood, as the civic center of the city, as an economic center of the region, and as the image and identity projected to the world through visitors and the media.

The new zoning ordinance will encourage the development of distinctive downtown places through development standards which reinforce a sense of identity, while linking these places with a fine-grained mix of uses, transportation connections and transitions in the urban fabric. It will encourage the right form in the right place so that place and connection is reinforced and will ensure, with clear and predictable rules, that every building enhances the quality of place and the quality of life for downtown residents, workers and visitors.

#### 1. Consolidate the downtown zoning districts to better reflect the mix of places identified in the Master Plan.

*Transform downtown from a series of individual destinations into a cohesive, interconnected, and well managed destination...*—UNOP DISTRICT 1 REPORT 1.

What emerges in the Master Plan is a mixed-use downtown that should be zoned as five vibrant mixed-use area types. Each of these areas is a unique but connected place within the compact area of the Central Business District. Zoning can shape and guide the development of these areas to strengthen both their function and identity.

- *A Center of Business and Commerce:* Support the economic potential of downtown with a commercial district geared to the needs of business. This district is characterized by a range of office, commercial, government and institutional uses with supporting services.
- *A Mixed-Use Marketplace:* Support the vitality of downtown by creating a mixed-use district intended to encourage the reuse of existing structures and the compatible infill of new construction with a mix of small floor plate office, retail, institutional, and residential uses.



- *The World's Meeting Place*: Support appropriate development immediately adjacent to the Superdome and the Convention Center by creating a major venue zoning district.
- *A Great Urban Neighborhood*: Support the demand for mid-high-rise residential development and the appropriate transition to the surrounding neighborhoods by creating a district that is primarily intended to accommodate higher intensity residential development and smaller-scale commercial uses on the lower floors, with residential uses above
- *A Crossroads of Cultural Tourism*: Support the clustered development of museums and cultural venues by creating a district for these uses and supporting retail and visitor services that promote the arts.

## **2. Encourage higher-density development organized around a well-organized urban form.**

The Central Business District is different from development in other parts of the city because higher levels of building height and bulk are allowed. Uses are stacked vertically and clustered close together along the street. This “intensity” of use contributes to the vitality of the area, and the organization of uses within the new ordinance should not change that. Development standards need to fit the size and scale of new development to the purpose of the district, the character of the adjacent street, the existing historically significant buildings, and the adjacent districts.

- Reinforce a recognizable image of downtown and compatible edges with the surrounding neighborhoods by establishing coordinated height and bulk standards for the Central Business Districts.
- Discourage new structures of less than three stories.
- Establish Poydras Street and Loyola Avenue as the “spine” of the CBD, serving as the corridors of highest intensity development.
- Encourage height and massing to step down from Poydras to a mix of low- to mid-rise-scaled buildings, gradually making a transition into the Mid-City neighborhood.
- Encourage height and massing to step down downriver from Poydras to the mid-rise, mixed-use character of Canal Street and the low-rise character of the Vieux Carré.

## **3. Create active and attractive street corridors that promote multimodal connections between different areas of the CBD, accommodate transportation access and parking demand, and encourage a high level of pedestrian traffic and pedestrian amenity.**

- Establish a system of primary streets with design standards that are characterized by continuous zero-lot-line street wall, active ground-floor uses, transparency (portion of the building frontage with windows) and permeability (building frontage with doors opening on to the street).
- Establish a system of secondary streets with design standards that provide for the service side of buildings, auto-oriented uses like drive-through windows and gas stations and car washes, and parking structures.
- Encourage the provision of parking in an amount, location and design that meets the operational needs of the CBD and supports the urban design goals for the streetscape by permitting non-accessory parking only consistent with a parking plan and setting maximum accessory parking ratios for all uses to limit non-accessory parking in the wrong places.

## **4. Conserve the character of historic and special places.**

Approximately 70 percent of downtown sits within a local or national historic district. These are the Vieux Carré Historic District, Canal Street Historic District, Picayune Place Historic District, Lafayette Square Historic District and the Warehouse Historic District.

- Establish a coordinated set of development regulations with the Central Business District's Historic Guidelines to create a clear and transparent approval process.
- Support historic investments by removing unnecessary obstacles to the rehabilitation of existing buildings. These include the calculation of parking requirements and the expansion of nonconforming uses.

## **5. Create a green and sustainable environment.**

- Require usable open spaces on or off site for new residential units created downtown.
- Require, where appropriate, contributions to a network of open spaces through the development approval process or requirements.
- Accommodate riverfront open space to address the Reinvesting the Crescent Plan.

## **EMPLOYMENT CENTER ZONING DISTRICT PRINCIPLES**

### **1. Create a more stable investment climate by reducing conflicts both within industrial districts and between adjacent non-industrial districts.**

- Provide appropriate locations for business and light industrial facilities in settings attractive and accessible to visitors and employees and make available employment opportunities near residential areas.
- Provide appropriate locations for warehousing, distribution, storage and manufacturing characterized by activities outside an enclosed building, 24 hour operations and/or high volume truck movements.
- Refine the industrial district use lists so that uses appropriate to the desired intensity and market orientation of the industrial district are permitted, rather than requiring a conditional use or text amendment. The current use structure of the industrial districts does not create a predictable development environment for potential new industries. Numerous uses typical to an industrial district are not permitted by-right.
- Refine the current industrial district structure to accommodate a range of industrial development including standards for research and light industrial/office parks.
- Include design standards for both buildings and the larger design of the site for industrial, business, and research parks. Design standards will help to mitigate impacts and assure a desired aesthetic image.
- Review performance standards for industry in establishing uses and evaluating impacts near residential areas.

### **2. Create new and strengthen existing districts that accommodate large office, medical and educational employment centers, without significant impact on residential components.**

- Create districts that accommodate the variety of campus uses within New Orleans, such as educational institutions, the new Medical District, and the proposed bio-medical corridor along Tulane Avenue. Specific zoning for such developments can facilitate a more orderly and efficient regulation process. Specific district development regulations should clearly indicate the scope of each development, requirements for transitions between campus activities and adjacent neighborhoods, and procedures for addressing concerns raised between the institution, the City and adjacent neighborhoods.



- Allow mixed-use development in campus districts.
- Craft appropriate boundary transitions between major uses and the surrounding neighborhood to ensure good neighbor compatibility.
- Institute planned development review for larger projects to better integrate new projects into their context. While this is especially appropriate for campus-like developments, this can be beneficial in numerous types of other non-residential development.

**3. Attract new employers by creating a positive image through appropriate development standards.**

- Include new landscaping standards to buffer incompatible uses, screen parking lots and outdoor storage areas, and improve the appearance of the site and street frontage.
- Tailor sign standards to the nature of the district, both in terms of the types of signs allowed as well as the size. The regulations should work to achieve a coordinated appearance within a commercial area or along commercial corridors.
- Incorporate a design review process that informs both the developer and the neighbor of community design standards and operational concerns.

## **A Zoning Response to the Master Plan Theme: Sustainable Systems**

Zoning for sustainability helps shape development that is energy and resource-efficient, minimizes the impact of human land uses, and promotes compatibility with local climate and environmental systems. Although most of New Orleans continues to need the structural protection of its levee systems, there are many additional ways in which the City can enhance its environmental sustainability and safety to become a “green” leader among the world’s river delta cities.

The master planning process has identified a series of goals and policies that broadly define the qualities of a sustainable city in terms of community facilities and services, transportation, environmental quality and hazard mitigation.

Zoning can support and encourage sustainable development by eliminating or revising existing rules that unnecessarily hinder sustainable development, incentivizing sustainable design techniques, and requiring basic sustainable development standards which address landscape, building materials, building siting, and relate the location of use types and densities to properly scaled transit access.

**1. Protect and provide for open spaces appropriate to conserving the regions natural resources and meeting the needs of its residents.**

- Provide appropriate locations for open spaces and public recreational areas.
- Distinguish between areas of preservation and areas of recreation.

**2. Promote the use of water conservation and innovative stormwater management techniques in site planning and new construction.**

- Promote the use of semi-pervious paving materials, especially for large paved areas.
- Encourage, and in some cases require, sustainable stormwater management practices, scaled to the size and character of the site. Current techniques include bioswales, green roofs, and parking lot landscaped islands that are designed to absorb stormwater.

- Prohibit drainage of remaining wetlands for building except by special permit with mitigation that requires an opinion by the City Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs, or establish a local wetlands ordinance to regulate impacts on wetlands.

**3. Increase access to healthy food at a lower environmental cost by supporting the production, processing and distribution of locally grown food.**

- Allow community gardens and urban agriculture in appropriate locations. In addition, community gardens can be permitted as well as required for certain types of new construction, such as large multifamily developments.
- Permit temporary farmers markets in certain districts, subject to regulations, so that locally-grown produce can be sold within the community.
- Allow small-scale food processing in certain commercial districts.

**4. Reduce the urban heat island impact through design of new development which minimizes reflective flat surfaces.**

- Require parking lot landscaping that shades the surface with tree cover to reduce the heat island impact.
- Include parking alternatives, such as shared parking lots and parking space maximums, to reduce the amount of paved surface in a new development.
- Allow for land banking of parking facilities—where a portion of a parking area is kept in green space until the paving of additional parking areas is necessary—to reduce impervious surface.
- Include parkway tree planting requirements.

**5. Reduce the rate of greenhouse gas emissions by promoting the use of alternative energy systems and increasing transportation choice.**

- Permit solar collectors as an accessory use but with the proper zoning standards in place to minimize negative aesthetic impact.
- Create building siting guidelines for larger developments to allow for passive solar systems.
- Allow small-scale wind energy systems, subject to standards that regulate noise levels at the property line.
- Require bicycle parking facilities for certain types of new development, as well as bicycle storage facilities in larger residential development.
- Establish standards that address the number of bicycles to be accommodated for various land use categories.
- Require setback maximums or build-to standards to establish the desired scale of development within areas where a pedestrian-orientation is desired.
- Require a landscape separation between the pedestrian and the auto in the site design of new developments.
- Provide attractive and safe pedestrian walkways across vehicular areas and through parking lots.

- Require pedestrian cross-access connections between sites and to adjacent developments, to create a larger, walkable environment.
- Include provisions to encourage cross-access easements between adjacent parking areas for different businesses which can encourage shared parking areas and reduce curb cuts.
- Regulate the spacing of curb cuts to preserve sidewalk continuity for pedestrians and preserve on-street parking spaces.

## **A Zoning Response to the Master Plan Theme: From Plan to Action**

The master planning process has identified a series of goals and policies addressing the key elements of putting the plan to work: land use, citizen participation and modern implementation systems. As the Charter amendment has given the Master Plan the force of law, future zoning decisions must be consistent with the goals and policies of the Land Use element of the Master Plan.

A modern zoning ordinance should be more than just requirements and mandates. It should make it easy to do the right thing. Obstacles that stand in the way of desirable development practices should be removed, and the connection to the land use policies of the Plan should be evident in the both the text and the zoning map.

### **1. Ensure that planning and zoning work together.**

- Draft districts and regulations in the new Ordinance so that the City has the land use tools it needs to see the Master Plan vision come to fruition.
- Connect the Zoning Ordinance to the Master Plan through remapping based upon the future land use map. As districts are revised or new districts drafted, connection to the Plan's land use policy must be clear in the mapping of these districts.
- Provide for systematic neighborhood and citizen input into proposed zoning changes.
- Provide easy access to zoning information by making the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Map and application procedures easily available on the CPC website.
- Adopt a use structure that is tailored to the intent of each district, but is flexible enough to respond to emerging uses.

### **2. Simplify and streamline the ordinance**

- Replace discretion and administrative interpretation with standards whenever possible to make the ordinance consistent and predictable in development decisions.
- Clarify the administrative provisions to create a consistent, predictable and understandable process for Ordinance users whether they are a developer, City staff person or interested resident.
- Make the ordinance easier to understand by modernizing terms, using appropriate illustrations, tables, matrices and charts.
- Eliminate obstacles to development by deregulating routine matters, minimizing nonconformities, and eliminating unnecessary and redundant regulations.

## H Opportunity Sites

The planning team identified several large “opportunity sites” across the city that could support significant redevelopment. Located along existing or proposed transit routes, these vacant or underutilized light-industrial and commercial areas offer New Orleans a unique opportunity to build vibrant, contemporary, transit-oriented neighborhoods, main streets, and commercial centers. Of varying densities, these new developments could incorporate the best qualities of existing historic neighborhoods. Housing and commercial market analyses suggest that sufficient demand will exist to assure the success of redevelopment on these sites. The results of the market analyses shaped the recommendations for each of these sites, which collectively would bring New Orleans broadened housing choices, expanded retail offerings, increased sales tax revenues, and new jobs.



## OPPORTUNITY SITE 1

# New Orleans East

**N**ew Orleans East has played a key role in the city's recent history, offering thousands of residents an opportunity to live in gracious suburban-like neighborhoods without leaving the city they love and becoming in the process an emblem of growing African-American affluence. As of 2009, more than 50,000 residents have returned to "the East" to live, affirming their commitment to their neighborhoods and to New Orleans...and taking advantage of extensive infrastructure for protecting neighborhoods from rain-driven flooding and increased protection from storm-driven floods. Planning participants stressed that redevelopment of the former Plaza at Lake Forest mall plays a critical role in enhancing livability and pointed to the Renaissance Plan, which the community prepared in 2004. Residents voiced a strong desire for a wide variety of shopping and services, together with the return of a hospital and other uses that offered tangible improvements in quality of life. While the Renaissance Plan proposed added housing, residents indicated a strong desire for substantial home ownership and indicated concern that this housing might not maintain its value. Participants stressed that all redevelopment should achieve higher quality and design standards.

The planning team conducted market research to determine demand for important opportunity sites. The results for the plaza site indicate substantial potential for high-quality re-development, assuming community-based planning to ensure that the plaza is not redeveloped in piece-meal fashion.

### HOUSING POTENTIAL:

An analysis of residential market potential in the plaza area, conducted by Zimmerman/Volk Associates, found demand over the next five to seven years for roughly 1,000 units of housing. This demand includes a wide variety of ages, household types, and backgrounds; market-rate demand includes both ownership and rental units.

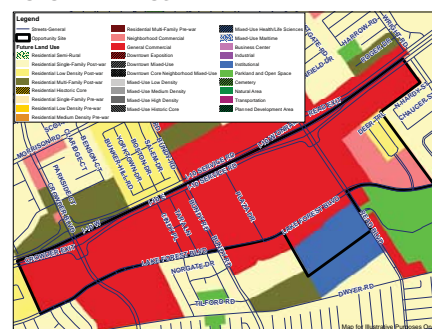
### OFFICE POTENTIAL:

W-ZHA also identified demand for new office space if the plaza area is redeveloped to a high level of quality with a variety of retail, restaurants, and similar amenities for office workers. Offices would probably not represent an early use, but the plaza area represents New Orleans' best opportunity to attract the kinds of employers that traditionally locate in office parks; they increasingly seek attractiv

### EXISTING SITE



### FUTURE LAND USE



### RETAIL MARKET POTENTIAL:

A retail market analysis prepared by W-ZHA for the New Orleans East trade area (the area in which the majority of customer sales originate) concluded that by 2013:

- Residents will hold approximately \$686 million in spending potential.
- The trade area could support one of the following options:
  - > A large super-community "neighborhood center" of 500,000–800,000 square feet that would include a general merchandise store (e.g., Wal-Mart), a large supermarket, big-box retailers, a movie theater complex, supportive chain retail, and eating and drinking establishments. (Under this option, the super center should be incorporated into a "town center" setting near one of the I-10 interchanges, and target needs of local residents, not a regional population.)
  - > Up to three neighborhood-serving retail centers of approximately 60,000–80,000 sf, each anchored by a medium sized supermarket, drug store and smaller service establishments. (Under this option, these neighborhood centers should be dispersed within the trade area.)

For complete market analyses, see Volume 3, Appendix.



OPPORTUNITY SITE: **NEW ORLEANS EAST**

Site Concept: **Transit-Ready Neighborhood Center**

2009



2030

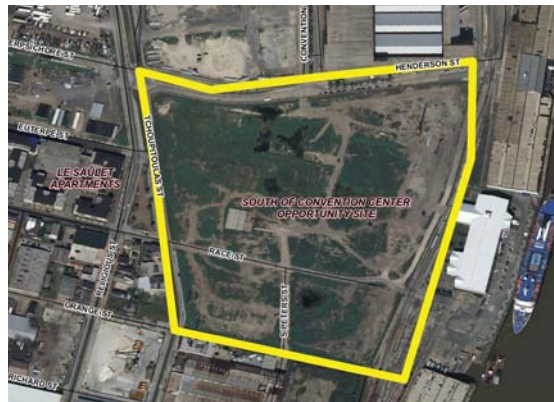


## OPPORTUNITY SITE 2

# South of Convention Center

**T**he large, vacant riverfront parcels—previously designated for a convention center expansion—would offer a unique opportunity to develop a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly and transit-supported residential neighborhood adjacent to the Warehouse District and CBD. The site and surrounding underutilized parcels could hold attractive high-rise and mid-rise buildings with neighborhood amenities such as restaurants, cafes and supportive retail conveniences. Residents would walk, or take the riverfront streetcar, to work in the CBD and developing Medical District. New green space corridors created as part of the redevelopment would connect existing neighborhood areas to riverfront park amenities while preserving views of the bridge and sky.

### EXISTING SITE



### FUTURE LAND USE



### HOUSING POTENTIAL

An analysis of residential market potential by Zimmerman/Volk Associates concluded the following:

- The opportunity site could support up to 1,750 new units of new mixed-income housing through 2014 (or 453 new units per year).
- The majority of units could be market rate (at least 75 percent).
- Potential households attracted to the area could include younger singles and childless couples (54 percent), urban families (29 percent) and empty nesters or retirees (17 percent).
- Approximately 58 percent of units be multifamily rentals (lofts and high rise apartments), and 42 percent owner-occupied multifamily, condos or co-ops, rowhouses and small lot single-family (detached and attached) homes.

### RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS

Due to its proximity to the Central Business and Warehouse districts, the opportunity site will target residential uses, however small neighborhood convenience retail will be located on the ground floor of some residential structures.

For complete residential and retail market analyses, see Volume 3, Appendix.



OPPORTUNITY SITE: **SOUTH OF CONVENTION CENTER**

Site Concept: **Riverfront Urban Village**

2009



2030





## OPPORTUNITY SITE 3

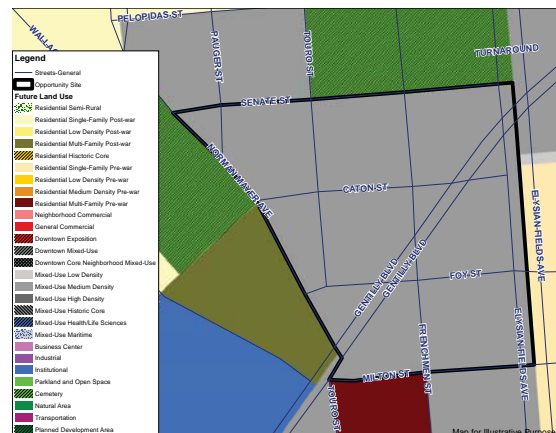
# Elysian Fields

The largely underutilized commercial parcels at the intersection of Elysian Fields Avenue and Gentilly Boulevard could be transformed into a compact mixed-use, mixed-income urban village. The new development, which has been recommended in previous planning efforts, could serve as a pedestrian focused “Main Street” to serve residents in surrounding neighborhoods, and the students and faculty at nearby Dillard University. Parking could be hidden behind the numerous storefronts that are oriented to the street including a specialty grocery, ground floor retail (with apartments and condos above), restaurants and other convenience goods. A future street car or bus rapid transit route could shuttle residents quickly to downtown jobs and cultural institutions, and to recreational amenities along the lakefront.

### EXISTING SITE



### FUTURE LAND USE



### HOUSING POTENTIAL:

An analysis of residential market potential by Zimmerman/Volk Associates concluded the following:

- The opportunity site could support up to 226 units of new mixed-income housing per year through 2014, for a total of 750 units.
- Potential households attracted to the area could include younger singles and childless couples (61 percent), urban families (28 percent) and empty nesters or retirees (11 percent).
- Approximately 58 percent of units could be multifamily rental units (lofts and apartments), with 42 percent owner-occupied, more than half of which would be in single-family homes (detached and attached). The remainder could be multifamily units (condos, co-op ownership).

### RETAIL MARKET POTENTIAL:

A retail market analysis prepared by W-ZHA for the Elysian Fields Avenue trade area (the area in which the majority of customer sales originate) concluded that by 2013:

- Residents in the trade area will hold approximately \$450 million in spending potential.
- Up to 100,000 square feet of retail space could be supported at the site.
- Neighborhood serving retail including a small grocery (30,000–50,000 sf), apparel and sundry shops, a hardware store, and take-out food establishments would offer the greatest opportunity at this location.
- Retail establishments should target local customers in a pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use environment.

For complete residential and retail market analyses, see Volume 3, Appendix.

OPPORTUNITY SITE: **ELYSIAN FIELDS**

Site Concept: **Mixed-Use, Transit-Ready Neighborhood Center**

2009



2030



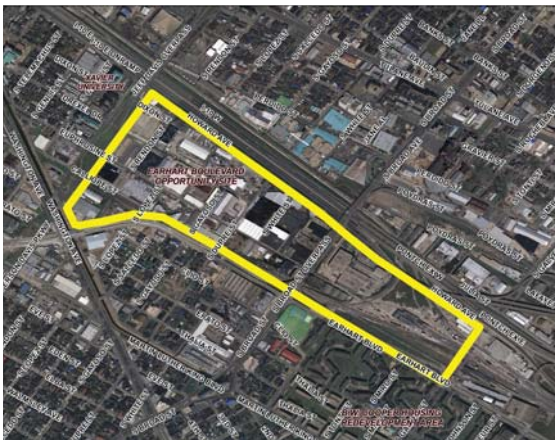


## OPPORTUNITY SITE 4

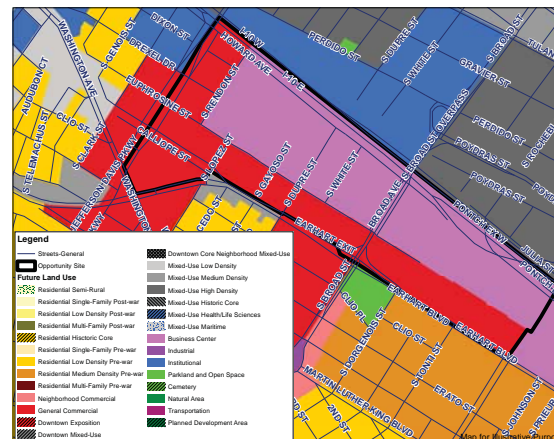
# Earhart Boulevard

Currently a mix of light industrial parcels (many underutilized) and vacant lots adjacent to the B.W. Cooper housing redevelopment project, the area holds the potential to serve as a city-oriented, urban retail center made up of medium to large big-box stores, a large supermarket and supporting national retailers. Customers could arrive by foot from new housing built on the former B.W. Cooper site, or by car from neighborhoods within a short distance drive. Parking will be located in the rear on surface or in structured lots, allowing storefronts to face the boulevard along a wide, pedestrian sidewalk featuring comfortable street furniture and outdoor cafes.

### EXISTING SITE



### FUTURE LAND USE



### HOUSING POTENTIAL:

An analysis of residential market potential by Zimmerman/Volk Associates concluded the following:

- The opportunity site could support up to 500 units of new mixed-income housing through 2014 (or 169 new units per year).
- Potential households attracted to the area could include younger singles and childless couples (57 percent), urban families (31 percent) and empty nesters or retirees (12 percent).
- Approximately 69 percent of units could be multifamily rental units (lofts and apartment), and 31 percent owner-occupied single-family (detached and attached) and multifamily units (condos, co-op ownership).

### RETAIL MARKET POTENTIAL:

A retail market analysis prepared by W-ZHA for the Earhart Boulevard trade area (the area in which the majority of customer sales originate) concluded that by 2013:

- Trade area residents will hold approximately \$2.3 billion in retail spending potential.
- Up to 300,000 square feet of retail space could be supported at the site.
- General merchandise, apparel, eating and drinking establishments, and food and beverage locations (supermarkets and groceries) would offer the greatest opportunity at this location.
- A community retail center, not a regional supercenter, anchored by a general merchandise or food store (e.g., Target or Wal-Mart), along with medium sized big box national retailers would best serve the trade area.
- The site would hold the potential to recapture up to \$100 million of spending (and sales tax revenues) that New Orleanians currently spend in surrounding parishes.

For complete residential and retail market analyses, see Volume 3, Appendix.

OPPORTUNITY SITE: **EARHART BOULEVARD**

Site Concept: **Urban Big Box Boulevard**

2009



2030



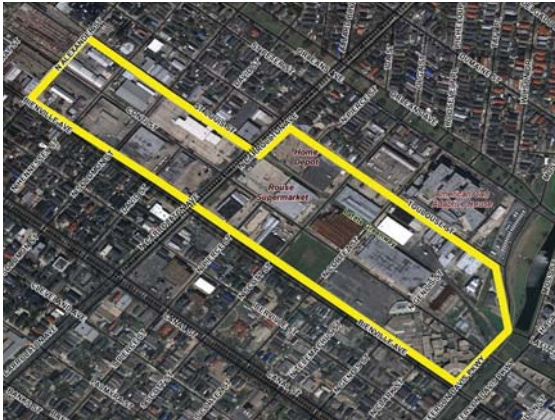


## OPPORTUNITY SITE 5

# Lindy Boggs/Mid-City

**R**edevlopment could transform the former Lindy Boggs Medical Center and collection of adjacent light industrial and commercial properties (many underutilized) into a vibrant, transit-oriented neighborhood center. Carrollton Avenue could serve as a pedestrian-oriented Main Street with a mix of medium-density, mixed-income housing above ground-floor retail (incorporating the existing Rouse Supermarket and Home Depot). Lower-density townhouse, two-family, and small lot single-family housing could be developed along the edges to transition into established residential neighborhood. New green space corridors lined with renewable energy wind turbines could connect to the Lafitte Greenway to create a unique green network for the entire Mid-City neighborhood.

### EXISTING SITE



### FUTURE LAND USE



### HOUSING POTENTIAL:

An analysis of residential market potential by Zimmerman/Volk Associates concluded the following:

- The opportunity site could support up to 386 units of new mixed-income housing per year through 2014, for a total of 1,500 units.
- Potential households attracted to the area could include younger singles and childless couples (41 percent), urban families (37 percent) and empty nesters or retirees (22 percent).
- Approximately 68 percent of units could be multifamily rentals (lofts and apartments), and 32 percent owner-occupied single-family homes (detached and attached) and multifamily units (condos, co-op ownership).

### RETAIL MARKET POTENTIAL:

A retail market analysis prepared by W-ZHA for the Lindy Boggs Mid City trade area (the area in which the majority of customer sales originate) concluded that by 2013:

- Residents will hold approximately \$1.8 billion in spending potential.
- Up to 150,000 square feet of additional retail space could be accommodated on site.
- Card shops, discount merchandisers, toy and hobby stores, affordable restaurants and neighborhood service locations (banks, beauty salons, barber shops) would offer the greatest opportunity.
- Retail should target local customers, and not serve as a regional destination.
- Initial development should cluster at Carrollton Avenue around the Rouse's and Home Depot, and grow incrementally as market demand increases. (The existing Home Depot and Rouse's supermarket would remove a considerable amount of risk, and could be leveraged to attract additional retailers.)

For complete residential and retail market analyses, see Volume 3, Appendix.

OPPORTUNITY SITE: **LINDY BOGGS/MID-CITY**

Site Concept: **Transit-Oriented Development Neighborhood**

2009



2030





## OPPORTUNITY SITE 6

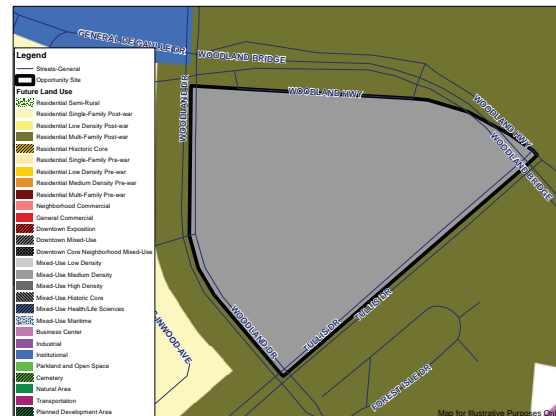
# Woodland Highway

**R**eddevelopment of the former Schweggman's supermarket site should be predominantly residential, with a mix of single-family, townhouse, and multifamily housing units in a pedestrian village-like setting with a town center of specialty retailers including a small market, wine shop, dry cleaner and other neighborhood conveniences to serve residents. With the addition of a new, express BRT line to downtown, the village could support additional convenience retail to serve commuters from neighboring communities.

### EXISTING SITE



### FUTURE LAND USE



### HOUSING POTENTIAL:

An analysis of residential market potential by Zimmerman/Volk Associates concluded the following:

- The opportunity site could support up to 453 units of new mixed-income housing per year through 2014, for a total of 1,500 units.
- Potential households attracted to the area could include younger singles and childless couples (40 percent), urban families (36 percent) and empty nesters or retirees (24 percent).
- Approximately 49 percent of units could be multifamily rentals (lofts and apartments), and 51 percent owner-occupied, primarily single-family homes (detached and attached, including townhouses), and some multifamily condominiums.

### RETAIL MARKET POTENTIAL

A retail market analysis prepared by W-ZHA for the Woodland Highway trade area (the area in which the majority of customer sales originate) concluded that by 2013:

- Residents will hold approximately \$253.7 million in spending potential.
- Most of the Trade Area's day-to-day shopping will continue to occur to the north in the vicinity of the intersection between General DeGaulle Drive and Behrman Highway.
- The site's redevelopment will not be driven by retail, but instead with residential development.
- If high income households reside in new housing on the site, the opportunity exists for some specialty retail (approximately 40,000 square feet), most likely a card or gift shop, florist or wine store.

For complete residential and retail market analyses, see Volume 3, Appendix



OPPORTUNITY SITE: **WOODLAND HIGHWAY**

Site Concept: **Suburban Residential Center with Supporting Retail**

2009



2030



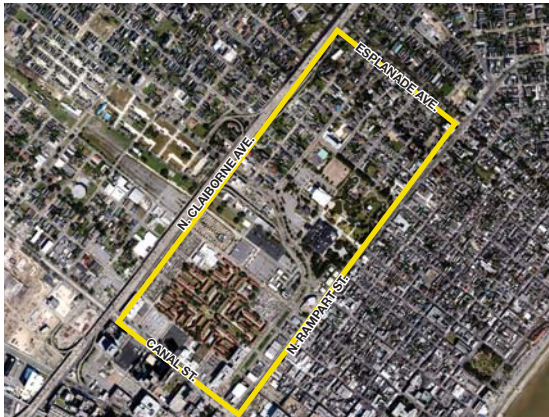


## OPPORTUNITY SITE 7

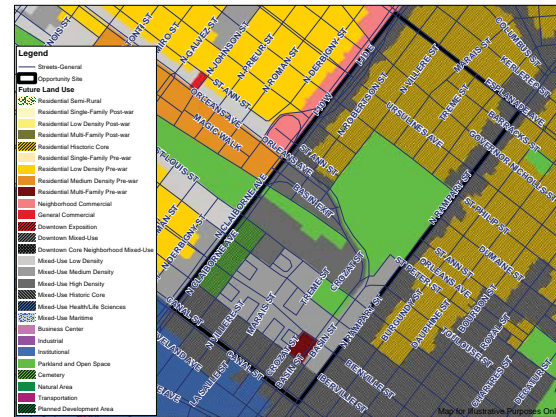
# Basin Street

**M**ultiple developments with the potential for large-scale economic development, community revitalization, housing, cultural identity, and environmental responsibility have been proposed for the area between North Rampart Street and North Claiborne Avenue linking the Iberville and Tremé communities and surrounding neighborhoods. These include the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative Iberville Redevelopment, the Livable Claiborne Communities study, the North Rampart streetcar, the Lafitte Greenway, and the redevelopment of Armstrong Park. The level of attention and investment focused on this area necessitates significant community outreach to all stakeholders affected by the new development and a coordinated planning approach to weave these developments together. If properly coordinated, these developments can create a high-performing urban environment, remove physical barriers, and increase connections across multiple neighborhoods.

### EXISTING SITE



### FUTURE LAND USE



### THE FOLLOWING CONCEPTS SHOULD SERVE AS GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR FUTURE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN THIS AREA:

- Study the connection of the Lafitte Greenway, Armstrong Park and the Basin Street neutral ground to extend the network of green space. The Lafitte Greenway could connect to the Basin Street neutral ground to reach Canal Street, Loyola Avenue, Duncan Plaza, and the streetcar network.
- Promote walking, cycling, and public transportation as ways to increase access and enhance the number of visitors to the cultural, retail, entertainment, and recreational destinations in the area.
- Provide adequate and appropriate parking that balances the needs of residents and visitors. Coordination of parking facilities should be encouraged in the planning and design of large developments, and opportunities for shared parking for complimentary uses should be explored. Preference should be given to structured parking garages rather than surface parking lots where possible.
- Consider traffic-calming measures for Basin Street to increase safety and expand opportunities for pedestrian oriented retail.
- Support the re-establishment of the historic street grid where appropriate in order to increase connectivity between Tremé, Iberville, the Vieux Carré, the Central Business District, and surrounding neighborhoods. Give preference to the removal of barriers and the establishment of street connections as part of all major development projects and plans for the area.
- Study ways to enhance the amenities in Armstrong Park and to strengthen connections between the park and the surrounding communities.
- Incorporate sustainable water features as both an amenity and a means to manage stormwater runoff.
- Study ways to integrate the performance venues, museums, historic sites, recreational facilities, and other destinations in the area into a cohesive and identifiable cultural district. A nuanced approach to signage and other means of wayfinding should be considered. Evaluate the establishment of entertainment uses along Basin Street with consideration for the protection of residential quality of life in surrounding neighborhoods.

OPPORTUNITY SITE: **BASIN STREET**

**2012**



**2030**



Renderings from City of New Orleans' "Lafitte Corridor Revitalization Plan" and "Lafitte Greenway Master Plan"